



THE COCKPIT EFFECT 2023

Spaces for Growth

April 2023 cockpitstudios.org

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FOREWORD

Right now, it's tough out there for makers, especially those in the fragile early years of their careers. In Spaces for Growth, the 12th edition of Cockpit's award-winning impact report, you will discover how they are rising to the challenges of our times with verve and imagination.

We live in extraordinary times: economic upheaval, social fragmentation, health and mental health pandemics, climate crisis and the risk of environmental collapse. In the face of all this, it would be easy to despair. Instead, we must act. It is for each of us to ask how we might use our gifts, resources and skills to respond.

It is my belief that the values inherent in craft offer something important in these testing times. Craft calls our attention back to where things come from: where they are made, what they are made from, how they are made, and who makes them. Craft connects us to ourselves, to each other, and to the world around us.

As a creative social enterprise, Cockpit's values are inspired by the maker's trinity: head, heart and hand. We are kind, curious and bold. Kindness is the foundation, treating each other with care and empathy, recognising we are all connected. Curious, we ask what if? How might we make a better world? Bold, we know it is not enough to care and imagine, we must also take action to make a difference.

As this year's report shows, despite the turbulent times, Cockpit makers are showing remarkable resilience, supported by David Crump, our Head of Business Incubation and our team, and buoyed by the vibrant community at our studios.

We create spaces for growth, where talented, creative people can grow into their full potential. It takes time to hone brilliance, many years to become an overnight success. And that time costs, especially in London. The upshot? Creative practice is open only to the already privileged few. Cockpit dissolves those barriers. More than just studios, we bridge the gap between talent and opportunity.

As the only incubator for makers, with an in-house team of specialist coaches, we train makers to succeed on their own terms, creatively and commercially. Each year we support 40 new makers into practice on funded places. Offering space, equipment and advice that would otherwise be out of reach, these scholarships give new makers the strongest possible footing to go on to future success. In this report, you will read just how we make it happen, and be inspired by the stories and insights of seven talented craftspeople who call Cockpit home.

A voice for making in all its forms, Cockpit stands for the transformative power of craft to shape a better world. Craft brings ideas into reality, transforming raw materials into dazzling creations. We like to think we shape things for the better in just the same way: with skill, care and imagination. Call it the human touch.

We cannot do all this alone. I extend heartfelt thanks to all those who make our mission possible: our funders, donors and individual supporters, our myriad partners who are all so inspiring to work with, Cockpit's talented and dedicated staff team, and our Trustees who give their time, energy and enthusiasm so generously.

Thank you all. Together, we are making a better world.

Annie Warburton
Chief Executive



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cockpit Effect report gives an insight in to the craft businesses that Cockpit works with, the challenges they face, how we support them and the impact that we and, just as importantly, they believe our support makes.

This is our first print report in two years. It highlights the creativity of our makers not only in their work but also in the ways in which they respond to challenge, reach their audiences and develop sustainable models for their businesses. All this against the backdrop of the post-Covid, post-Brexit world.

Cockpit celebrates being a diverse community in several dimensions: age, cultural background, craft discipline, business model, type of practice, and years of experience. Practicing 21 different craft disciplines, our 166 makers represent all career stages and all types of business models. Cockpit's maker community is also more diverse than that of craft as a whole: 23% of Cockpit makers come from a Global Majority background and 82% describe themselves as female.

Like others in the cultural sector, Cockpit's maker community was heavily impacted by Covid and its aftermath. Yet, as a community we came through that period in strength, keeping our two studio buildings safely open throughout and offering radical financial and other support to makers. As a result, Cockpit's community remained intact. Our buildings are fuller than ever, with more than five applicants for every place, and financial results indicate that our makers are bouncing back with strong trading performances.

Average turnover reported for the year 2021/22 was £45,553, an increase of 12% on the previous year. Grossed up for the whole community, this indicates a turnover in excess of £7.5M.

The average profit reported was £17,504, an increase of £728 (4%) on the previous year. Grossed up for the community as a whole gives a combined profit of £2.9m.

When the value of employment, whether PAYE or freelancers, is added, the GVA for the community as a whole is estimated to be £3.7m, an improvement from last year's figure of £3.36M. In concrete terms, this means that every £1 invested in Cockpit generates a return of £3.36.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Several themes have emerged in this year's report.

Resilience and adaptability – playing to strengths

For Cockpit's maker community, the need to read and adapt to a changing craft landscape continues to dominate. Collectively we are deciphering and responding to the changing landscape of craft, from in-person buying events to online purchasing, and from sustainable, ethical provenance to the position of craft in the contemporary art market.

The need for continual professional and business development

This is a constant theme, and a partial explanation for why Cockpit remains relevant for makers even as they become established or as they move on from having a physical base our studios.

The significance of workshop experiences

Whether offering workshops or teaching in educational institutions, using their skills is an essential part of the overall model for many makers. Post Covid, in-person workshops have bounced back and continue to divide between experiential one-off sessions and more regular ones with people wanting to develop their craft skills.

Community Engagement

We've had a great year for community engagement, providing a foundation for work to come as we develop the new pipeline of makers. Our development at Deptford – which will see new studio spaces, a craft garden, and learning centre when it opens in autumn 2023 – signals a step-change in our efforts to introduce the community at large, and young people in particular, to craft and what it can offer for wellbeing and as a serious profession.

The potential to reach wider audiences

Embracing online delivery, alongside working with makers in person, has opened up opportunities to reach a far wider audience of makers right around the country. The past year has been a period of testing ways of interacting with makers, individually and through partner organisations. Our goal now is to take this forward in the coming year, using “The Cockpit Effect” to benefit yet more makers.

David Crump

Head of Business Incubation

THE COCKPIT EFFECT 2023

COMMUNITY



166

MAKERS

23%
global
majority



21

DISCIPLINES



30%

jewellery



14%

textiles



10%

ceramics

ROUTES TO MARKET



58%

makers
sell through
retailers



30%

makers
represented
by galleries



online
sales
34%
of
turnover

1.5 MILLION
for Cockpit
as a whole

makers
exporting

56%



exports by
Cockpit makers
£628K

top regions
for exporting

62%

Europe

51%

North
America



FINANCIALS



total
annual sales

£7.6

MILLION



average
turnover

UP 12%

year-on-year



average
profits

UP 4%

year-on-year



total annual gross
value added

£3.7

MILLION



people employed
by makers
(PAYE or freelance)

91

BUSINESS SUPPORT



93

workshops



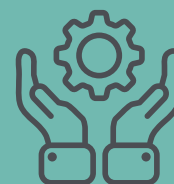
541

coaching
sessions



276

makers
supported



2452

hours
business
support

SECTION 1

ABOUT COCKPIT

Cockpit is a centre of excellence in contemporary craft. Spanning every type of craft, Cockpit makers are united by their extraordinary skill and imagination. Bridging the gap between talent and opportunity, our mission is to equip makers to succeed on their own terms, creatively and commercially.

A charity and UK top 100 social enterprise, Cockpit gives makers tools to build their businesses so they can focus on what they do best: making. We provide funded studio space, in-house business training and coaching, and exhibition opportunities for 160+ makers practicing 20+ different disciplines.

Makers at Cockpit are selected for excellence in craft skill, originality of creative voice and ambition to succeed professionally. We also look for an aspiration to contribute to the wider community. Since our founding in 1986, many makers whose early careers were nurtured here have gone on to become celebrated international names in their fields.

As the only incubator for craft talent anywhere, all our places are subsidised and each year we generate more than £200,000 to support 30+ makers with funded places.

From studio space to business advice, Cockpit is where careers in craft are made.

OUR STORY

Cockpit's name comes from our first studio site at Cockpit Yard, Bloomsbury. Originally an eighteenth-century cockfighting arena, the yard was taken over by a cabinet maker in 1745. It has been a site for craft and making ever since.

Cockpit as we know it today began in 1986 when Camden Recycling created five starter units in Cockpit Yard for young, unemployed makers. In the early 2000s we opened our second location in Deptford and launched our pioneering business support programme. From there, Cockpit's reputation grew to become the destination for makers starting up in practice. Highly sought-after, a place at Cockpit is a mark of quality.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Cockpit Effect report gives an insight in to the craft businesses that we work with, the challenges they face, how we work with them and the impact that our support makes.

This is the first time since 2020 that we have produced a full, print report. During Covid, we stepped back slightly, sharing the core data that we received from our makers in infographic form, recognising that the times called for our focus to be on other, more pressing matters.

This year's report looks at makers' data from 2020/21 and 2021/22 and thus encompasses the period of full lockdown as well as the following year.

To illustrate the human stories behind the numbers, we shine a spotlight on seven makers who talk about their work and share their personal take on Cockpit's impact.

This year, we have also included a spotlight on some of the Cockpit team to reveal some of what happens behind the scenes and share what motivates them to do what they do.

Specific sources of data for 2022/23 are:

- 71 financial surveys completed by Cockpit makers
- Maker applications for studio space, awards and workshop programmes
- 166 applications for studio places (standard or awards/bursaries)
- Maker Surveys conducted during the year
- Awardee progress reports
- Workshop programme feedback
- Exit Interviews
- One-to-one coaching sessions

MAKER SPOTLIGHT DALIA JAMES

Dalia James joined Cockpit in 2022. She is on a three-year Award, originally funded by The New Craftsmen, now funded by Cockpit



I'm Dalia James and I am a weaver.

I create woven hand-woven pieces for interior settings.

I am inspired by early 20th Century art and design movements – the Bauhaus School, Dadaism and De Stijl, architecture and geometry.

My vision and ambition is to have a portfolio practice encompassing artworks, bespoke interior commissions, workshops and retail.

The challenges/blocks that I've faced are being a working new mum, being able to afford a large enough studio, the anxiety about whether I can succeed, caused by a lack of Black, brown and working-class representation in the arts, and having the time to develop my practice as I would like.

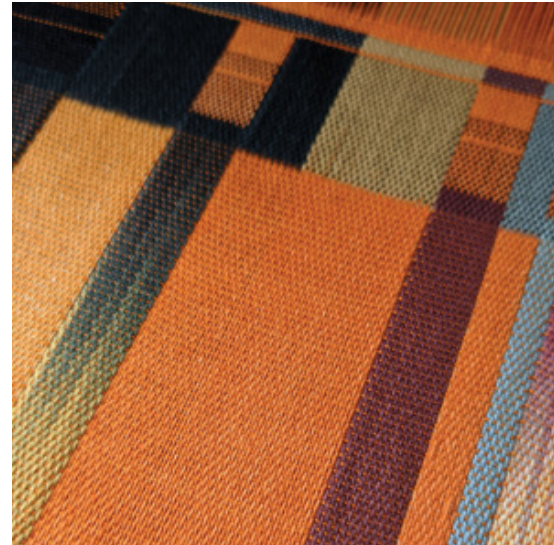
My career highpoint so far is being awarded an Arts Council England grant in 2020/2021

Being in the Cockpit community means being able to progress my practice – it means the chance of earning a decent living from my work.

Cockpit has helped me overcome challenges by providing a studio space and taking the huge financial pressure of funding such a space off my shoulders, allowing me to focus on career development.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Workshops and bespoke rugs.



SECTION 2

COCKPIT COMMUNITY – WHO WE ARE

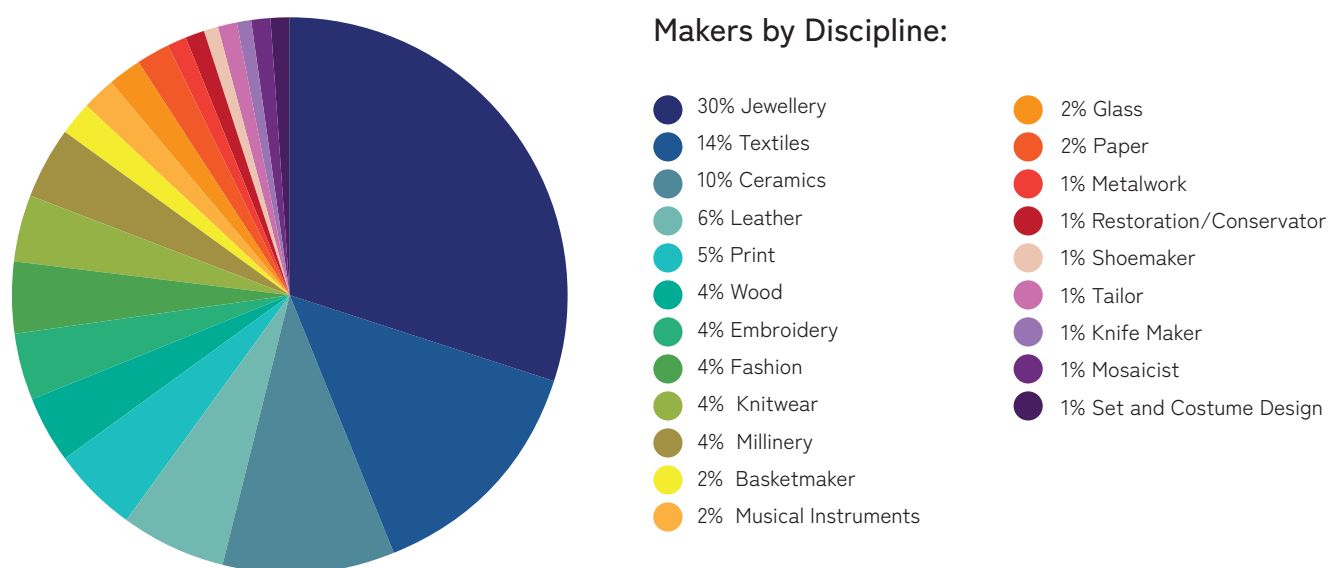
Cockpit celebrates being a diverse community in dimensions of age, cultural background, craft discipline, model of business and practice and years of experience.

Recognising that creativity and innovation are fuelled by diversity, we foster an inclusive culture where all aspects of diversity are celebrated and seen as key to success and flourishing.

Craft disciplines

Our 166 makers at Bloomsbury and Deptford work in 21 different disciplines, with the top seven of those representing nearly three-quarters (73%) of the maker community. Whilst the top four disciplines continue to be jewellery (30%) textiles (14%) ceramics (10%) and leather (7%), we have seen an increase in representation of other disciplines, such as embroidery (4%).

The distribution and concentration of disciplines is driven by several factors. The proximity of our Bloomsbury studios to London's Hatton Garden jewellery quarter is a draw to jewellers. Many of our Awards and Bursaries are discipline-specific, reflecting the interests of our Livery Companies and other funders. Existing Cockpit makers also play an important role, acting as role models for future makers. We use new Awards and Bursaries to diversify the mix of disciplines further, for example with our new Glass Sellers Bursary and The Dyers Company Award.



COCKPIT COMMUNITY – WHO WE ARE

Demographics

In the context of the craft world, we are a diverse community: 23% of our makers are of a Global Majority background, a proportion that has grown over recent years. (In the Cockpit Effect report for 2020 the figure was 20%). This compares with a figure of just 4% in craft as a whole (Crafts Council, 2016). However, recognising that we have more to do if we want to reflect our neighbourhoods and London as a whole, we have a live, active and evolving equity, diversity and inclusion action plan in place.

GLOBAL MAJORITY

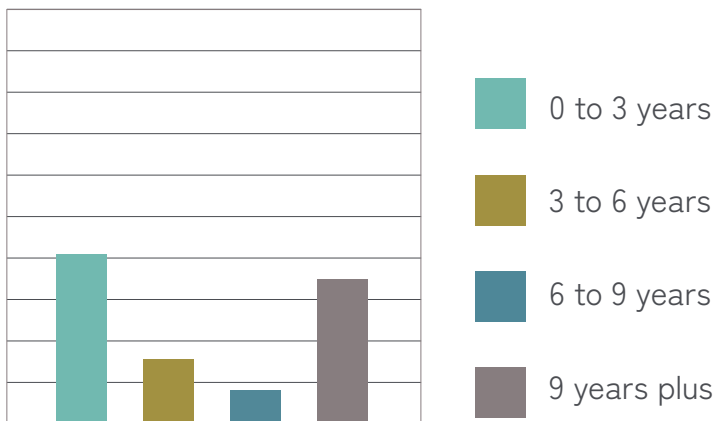
23%



Like craft as a whole, the majority of our community identifies as female (83%).

Career stages

As the chart below shows, the bulk of the makers at Cockpit are either at the early part of their career and have been with us for three years or fewer, or they are relatively mature businesses and have been at Cockpit for nine years or more.



Of these, 32 makers are on Awards or Bursaries, representing 19.3% of the whole population.

The majority of our makers are sole traders (82%) with the balance being Limited Companies or, in the case of some Awardees, not yet being registered.

Of the makers completing our financial survey, the average age in business was 14 years, and they had been at Cockpit for 8 of those years.

MAKER SPOTLIGHT CARL FOX

Carl Fox joined Cockpit in early in 2022 on a three-year Award funded by the Leathersellers Company.



I am Carl Fox and I'm a leatherworker.

I create marquetry artworks combining leather and wood veneer, using heritage techniques.

I am inspired by modernist design and architecture of the mid century.

My vision and ambition is to push the boundaries of my practice and introduce people to a more contemporary, tactile version of an ancient craft.

The challenges/blocks that I've faced are balancing the roles of business manager and craftsman, ensuring that my practice is both relevant and sustainable.

My career highpoint so far is becoming a full-time artist and exhibiting at Collect 2023

What being in the Cockpit community means to me? So much. By having such a range of amazing craftspeople around you, inspiration is only a few feet away.

Cockpit has helped me overcome challenges by giving me the tools and knowledge to face the challenging aspects of my business, and the ability to trust my gut more when making decisions.

WHAT'S NEXT?

I aim to bring my art to a wider audience, extend my skillset to create a wider range of work and to grow my business over the next 3-5 years.



SECTION 3

PIPELINE — INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

Whilst Cockpit's main focus is the makers based at our studios, encouraging young people to encounter craft has always been a high priority, with a role to play in cultivating and encouraging the makers of tomorrow.

Our workshop programmes are now extending to all generations, creating new opportunities for makers too, as they expand their portfolios, complementing making and selling with teaching and facilitating.

'I loved connecting with Lewisham residents during my Borough of Culture print workshops. My workshops invited participants to think about the borough and what they loved about it and bring those ideas to life in drawings and prints. I enjoyed hearing peoples' stories of their favourite places and why they had chosen them. The final prints they made were spectacular' Kethi Copeland, Cockpit maker and Print Workshop Leader

'Really wonderful workshop. We loved it. So nice to sit and so something creative with nice people and the session leader was brilliant!'
Attendee, Hmong Hat Making Workshop

'I work to support access for those living with dementia. Usually with these types of workshops the members with dementia tend to be quite disengaged, however with the workshops today they really got stuck in, they understood what to do and really enjoyed it. They were intrigued by the process and genuinely proud of the work they produced. The workshop was also a big success with other members who don't live dementia who were very keen to show me their work as well. There are very few activities I've seen that've garnered such enthusiasm from our members.'
Attendee, Public Art Workshop



Workshops
at Cockpit

20

Participants

114



Workshops
outside Cockpit

27

Participants

1102



School tours
and careers visits

4

Participants

102



University
Tours

7

Participants

132



People
Engaged

1450

Maxine joined Cockpit in 2018 and has supercharged the process of placing makers in studios, from application through to interview. She has also managed our youth and community events and partnerships, increasing access to the creativity behind Cockpit's doors. In 2022, she helped to engage 1450 members of the public in craft.

No day is the same for Maxine. She could be at her desk responding to applicant enquires, researching new partnerships and keeping herself up to date on new policy, or she might be out at a school, delivering activities in the community or assisting one of our many talented makers to run a workshop.

Cockpit was invited to host the final Creative Challenge for Lewisham's London Borough of Culture programme 2022. With characteristic composure, Maxine managed delivery of 11 free, family-friendly, accessible craft workshops, engaging over 200 members of Lewisham communities in person and reaching over 11,000 people online. To be as diverse and accessible as possible, workshops were held in three different libraries in the borough and run by workshop leaders from Cockpit and beyond.

Artists Annika Cox and Alice Burnhope curated the outcomes into a final installation. Alice, a Cockpit studio-holder, and Annika are both neurodivergent and the final installation, 'Murmuration', was created with neurodivergent audiences and participants in mind, achieved through changes to the lighting, inclusion of braille, wearable art pieces and soundscapes.

For makers, this kind of project increases confidence in delivering their own workshops and working with different groups. For the public, free and accessible events are an opportunity to learn, socialise and have fun. They also raise awareness of what's out there and what can be crafted at home.

In Maxine's words, 'I joined Cockpit as a Weston Jerwood Creative Bursary recipient. These bursaries support students from low-socioeconomic backgrounds into creative careers, so I want to make sure that I continue to give that opportunity when I can. We create for fun, for mental health and to move towards a shared goal. Teachers encourage their students to absorb as much creativity as they can, and community workshops are often full to the brim because they're affordable and accessible.'

Many Cockpit makers want to give back to their communities, to talk to the next generation about their work or make a statement through craft. Maxine has supported them to deliver workshops and give participants the confidence to try something new.



MAKER SPOTLIGHT ALICE BURNHOPE

Alice Burnhope joined Cockpit on our Make It programme in early 2021. Now in the second year of Make It, she was also awarded the Cockpit Textile Award in 2022.



I'm Alice Burnhope. I'm a sustainable textile artist specialising in socially-engaged artwork.

For my process, I use traditional textile techniques such as natural dyes, patchwork and quilting and utilise waste materials.

My inspiration comes from the sensory experience of being immersed in the natural world.

My vision and ambition is to inspire and create playful educational community spaces that support individuals' wellbeing and create a more inclusive and harmonious world through the use of waste textiles.

One of the challenges that I've faced has been not pursuing a traditional artist/maker business model by primarily selling my artwork. Instead, I'm creating a community-engaged practice based in skill-sharing with community workshops and commissioned socially-engaged projects. The difficulty has been trialling the unconventional and making it financially supportive.

My career highpoint so far is being contacted by Hayward Gallery to showcase my work within the Gallery Shop alongside the Louise Bourgeois exhibition, enabling the public to interact with my artwork.

Being in the Cockpit community creates a network of support to thrive. This is why I love Cockpit.

Cockpit has helped me overcome challenges by one-to-one mentoring and creating a system that works with my dyslexia.

WHAT'S NEXT?

I'm looking forward to heading over to Jersey to facilitate a community workshop for ArtHouse Jersey latest project 'Land and Us.' And looking forward to creating more immersive installations with community groups.



SECTION 4

WHY COCKPIT?

The tangible, practical elements of Cockpit's offer are clear, but makers also have other, less immediately obvious motivations for joining our community.

Space

Some makers who join Cockpit are making the leap from 'making do' at home or in shared spaces to having their first dedicated workspace. Others want to trade their existing, unsupported space for one that gives provides a greater sense of community and access to the Business Incubation team.

Equipment

Some of our awards include provision of equipment that would otherwise be out of the reach of the makers who apply, either because of cost, or the space required, or both. Our Deptford development will enhance the offer for makers who need this support, with the addition of a dedicated, for-purpose Wood Hub alongside the existing Leather and Weaving Hubs.

Audience

For many makers, their first experience of Cockpit is at an open studios event. These events give unparalleled access to an audience of specialist buyers, curators and commissioners, and an opportunity to test product and gain valuable sales. Responding to growing interest from curators, interior designers, store buyers and collectors, we offer curated tours and are actively developing partnerships with, among others, Decorex, Design Centre Chelsea Harbour and Locke Hotels to bring makers' work to new audiences.

Community

Overcoming isolation and being among peers is an important motivator for joining. Many makers who apply to Cockpit already have connections with existing studio holders, and some will have worked for makers based here. Others have experienced our community through participation in one of our outreach programmes.

WHY COCKPIT?

Business Support

Throughout the application process, from initial submission to interview, makers find it fairly straightforward to verbalise their need for the tangible elements, but much trickier to pinpoint what they need from our business support offer. Applicants will often point to an existing or past studio holder as an example of what they would like their business to look like, or what they aspire to achieve, without being able to unpick what support they might need to get there. What they do know is that they associate being at Cockpit with success, and they are ambitious to achieve that success themselves.

Applying to Cockpit

Makers at Cockpit are selected for excellence in craft skill, originality of creative voice and ambition to succeed professionally. We also look for a wish to contribute to the wider craft community. Our places are advertised widely through the craft, design and art media, with some awards focused exclusively on addressing underrepresentation or on particular craft disciplines.

Applications are reviewed by an in-house panel to select a shortlist of makers who are invited to interview. Interview panels comprise a Cockpit business coach, along with two or three craft experts, in-house or external. Often Award and Bursary sponsors will join the panel.

In 2022/23 we received a total of 166 applications for a place at Cockpit. Of these, 17% were successful. Seeing the application process as a developmental process, we offer feedback sessions to all interviewees who don't get offered a place. These are micro-coaching sessions of up to 30 minutes. We encourage makers to consider reapplying when the timing is right. Those who do, and who have absorbed feedback, are often successful on a subsequent round.

MAKER SPOTLIGHT REBECCA GEORGE

Rebecca George is based in Deptford and joined Cockpit in March 2022, with a place on our two-year Make It programme.



I'm Rebecca George, founder of OFFCUTT. I'm a hat and accessories maker.

I work with leather offcuts, I use a post bed leather machine and various leather crafting tools.

I am inspired by the forms and structures that arise in the natural world, for example the patterns and anatomy of plants, insects and animals. I'm interested in how nature evolves and adapts to its environment and the design outcome of this.

My vision and ambition is for OFFCUTT to create a full range of accessories such as hats, bags, wallets, belts and footwear.

The challenges/blocks that I've faced are balancing the business aspects with the creative aspect and finding a balance between the two. Cockpit has played a huge role in supporting me when learning how to run a business.

My career highpoint so far is selling my work to costume designer PC Williams for the Netflix original series 'The Kitchen'.

The community is definitely one of the most inspiring aspects of being at Cockpit. It's wonderful to be surrounded by so many talented and like-minded people.

Cockpit has helped me overcome challenges by giving me further insight into options and opportunities that are available to me, and being in such a creative and inclusive environment has allowed me to develop a new level of confidence within my practice.

WHAT'S NEXT?

My next step is to attend a shoe making course with 'The Parachute Collective' and I'm currently applying for various grants in order to fulfil the next steps in my career.



SUPPORTING MAKERS TO SUCCEED

In total, Cockpit provided 2452 hours of support to 276 makers, whether studio holders at Cockpit, individual makers outside Cockpit, or members of other organisations.

To give context to the level of support, the Crafts Council's 2022 survey of 639 makers nationwide revealed that half (49%) invest less than £100 per year in their professional development.

One-to-one coaching sessions are on offer to all makers at Cockpit, the frequency agreed between each maker and their coach. Coaching sessions are also offered to makers outside Cockpit taking part in one of our programmes.



THANK YOU FOR CREATING SUCH A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT, I'M GRATEFUL TO BE HERE AND EXCITED FOR THE YEAR AHEAD.

A total of 541 coaching sessions were delivered in the year to a total of 241 makers, with the breakdown as follows:



The core Cockpit workshops are delivered by the Business Incubation team, David Crump and Madeleine Furness. This core is augmented by bringing in sector specialists to speak to specific themes.

Makers joining through an Award or Bursary take part in a dedicated programme, Make it Count, that gives them a solid foundation on which to build their business or practice. Make it Count is offered twice yearly to maximise the benefit of the initial award year for each maker.

For the past ten years European (ERDF) funding has allowed Cockpit to extend our support to individual makers who are London-based but not at Cockpit studios. This European funding finished on March 31st 2023.

Over the past two years, we have trialled and developed an online workshop offer that has seen us expand into working with makers who are not London based. To date, the focus for these programmes has been working with makers who are members of other organisations (in other words, this is a business-to-business or B2B offer).

The prime example of this is our partnership with the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust (QUEST). QUEST offer two rounds of scholarships a year, with a cohort each time of around 20 scholars. Cockpit started partnering with QUEST in 2021, providing a Professional Development Programme of 13 workshops coupled with some one-to-one coaching sessions. In the past year we have worked with 42 QUEST scholars in two cohorts. Alongside the business support that the programme provides, the community and collaboration framework it offers is also important, allowing makers spread throughout the UK to connect with each other and make lasting connections.

In total, 93 business development workshops were delivered over the past 12 months to a total of 186 makers.



“

IT HAS BEEN AN INCREDIBLE HELP. IT HAS INFORMED ME IN MULTIPLE WAYS ON HOW TO APPROACH AND START UP MY OWN BUSINESS. IT HAS GIVEN ME THE COURAGE AND INSIGHT INTO WHO I AM AND WHAT I DO IN ORDER TO MAKE THE FIRST STEPS.

Sim Orme

“

AFTER EACH SESSION I FEEL VERY MOTIVATED. ASIDE FROM THE CRITERIA BEING EXPLORED, GETTING TO KNOW THE OTHER SCHOLARS IS FASCINATING AND MOTIVATIONAL. THE CRITERIA OF THE PROGRAM REALLY HELPS ME DIVE DEEPER PERSONALLY, ALLOWING ME TO THINK IN DEPTH ABOUT THINGS THAT I HAVE ONLY TOUCHED ON IN THOUGHT.

Kurtis Scott

“

I WOULD REALLY LIKE TO THANK EVERYONE AT COCKPIT FOR THEIR SUPPORT WITH EVERYTHING. I HAVE FOUND IT A BIT OF A STRUGGLE JUGGLING MY OTHER WORK AND FOCUSING ON MY BUSINESS OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS BUT THIS YEAR I WOULD LIKE TO REALLY FOCUS ON MAKING IT GROW WITH YOUR ASSISTANCE.

Ciara Bowles

“

IT IS HAVING A PROFOUND IMPACT ON MY PRACTICE, I HAVE REALLY SHIFTED IN MY IDEAS AROUND TURNING MY PRACTICE INTO A BUSINESS, A BRAND. THIS MAY SOUND STUPID BUT I HAVE NEVER ACTUALLY OPERATED AS A BUSINESS. I FEEL LIKE I HAVE SOME TOOLS AND OR A CHECK LIST TO SET IT INTO MOTION.

Mandy Coppes-Martin

MAKER SPOTLIGHT DARREN APPIAGYEI

Darren Appiagyei is based in Deptford and joined Cockpit in 2017 on the Workshopful Company of Turners Award at Cockpit.



My name is Darren Appiagyei and I am a wood artist

My practice is about embracing the intrinsic beauty of wood, be it knot, crack, bark or grain. I carve into wood using gouges and chisels on a lathe to create wooden vessels.

As a wood artist I have a passion for discovering and exploring new woods. I am highly inspired by Ghanaian wood, carving the rawness and exploring texture. Nature is a huge inspiration to me in its raw state. I gravitate towards its intrinsic beauty and marvel at its intricate details.

My vision and ambition is to inspire the next generation of wood artists to have the belief they can pursue and succeed in developing a craft practice.

Through my craft career over seven years I have faced many challenges, the biggest challenge I have faced is balancing a full time job along with developing my practice and pushing the limits, experimenting and developing new work.

I have many career highpoints but it all is ignited from winning the worshipful Company of Turners Award at Cockpit in 2017. Without the Award I would not be where I am now. I would have found it difficult to source a lathe or even find the studio space and time to experiment and develop my practice.

Cockpit is simply a huge inspiration to me, full of talent and creativity. It is an artistic hub. We all look out for each other and it is great to see so many craft people pursuing their passion.

Cockpit has helped me overcome challenges through the guidance of David Crump, the Head of Incubation at Cockpit, who advises me and challenges me to think differently in our and to overcome obstacles. Ultimately it is the support Cockpit gives for every business that is invaluable. Having a business in general can be difficult and isolating, especially if you are doing everything on your own. The support Cockpit give is definitely something to cherish.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Working towards producing work to apply for the Loewe Craft Prize in the near future.



Madeleine joined Cockpit in 2014, and since then has designed and delivered in-house business workshops, provided individual coaching to Cockpit makers, and brought in guest trainers and inspirational speakers. She has been engaged with Cockpit since her university days, when she visited Open Studios and took part in jewellery work placements with makers here.

The majority of Madeleine's time is spent in individual coaching with her Cockpit clients. She sees around four to 12 makers a week and discusses topics like: clarifying their focus, growing confidence, finance matters, exploring galleries they would like to target, and making authentic Instagram content. Cockpit makers are ambitious, successful and experts in their field – and Madeleine matches that. This means understanding each craft discipline, researching all possible business models and routes to market, and keeping up with sector developments.

Madeleine also develops Cockpit's flagship workshop programmes, which run for five to ten weeks several times a year, to support both new and established makers. These cover all aspects of building a business – such as, refining a product, learning how to manage the numbers, marketing and business planning – and are designed to support meaningful, lasting change. They are also flexible, intuitive, and informed by the makers' individual needs and, most importantly, their feedback. The business incubation team use a blended approach of personal performance coaching, mentoring informed by years of experience, SFEDI-certified business advice, and lifelong learning principles.

In 2022, Madeleine wrote and piloted Step It Up: a new workshop programme with a fresh approach for Cockpit's mid-career and established makers. For Madeleine, the best outcome is not necessarily seeing a maker get a high-profile opportunity or sale, but the 'ah-ha' moment that changes a behaviour or thought pattern that was getting in the way of that happening. For example, a jeweller's lightbulb moment: 'Oh, I have been thinking about my customers from my own perspective, but really I need to think about how I look to them.' The maker went on to tune her Instagram content, which in turn has attracted more of the right kind of enquiries and sales.



Madeleine emphasises visioning and goal setting, then working the practical steps backwards to get there. This helps the makers to be proactive, rather than reacting to opportunities that don't always get them to where they want to go. As a result, she sees makers grow in confidence, take the reins, knock on more doors and, where appropriate, have the confidence to say 'no'.

“

THIS IS IMPORTANT TO ME PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY. PERSONALLY, I TRULY BELIEVE IN A HOLISTIC APPROACH — WHEN YOU BELIEVE IN EACH INDIVIDUAL, IT GETS PEOPLE FURTHER. SOMETIMES IT TAKES PERSISTENCE AND PATIENCE, BUT IT PAYS OFF WHEN THEY BUILD A BUSINESS THAT IS SUSTAINABLE AND AUTHENTIC. PROFESSIONALLY, I HAVE BEEN PROVIDING TAILORED SUPPORT TO CRAFT BUSINESSES FOR 17 YEARS. I KNOW THIS APPROACH WORKS, AND I'VE EVOLVED IT THROUGH INTENSIVE INDIVIDUAL WORK WITH WELL OVER 1000 MAKERS AND COUNTING.'

Madeleine's work is like a golden circle. Many Cockpit makers show at the most prestigious craft events. Yet, there is still pressure at the top to create new work and grow. Her support for those established makers shows newer makers what's possible, in real-time. This keeps Cockpit at the forefront of fostering new talent and inspiring creative pioneers.

THE MARKET FOR CRAFT - A COCKPIT PERSPECTIVE

Gathering feedback from makers each year gives longitudinal insight into the craft market. The information in this report is based on data shared with us by 71 makers based at Cockpit, as well as insights gained from our work with other makers over the past year.

Data in this year's Cockpit Effect covers the financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22, a turbulent period for several reasons. The Covid lockdown started in March 2020 and lockdowns continued for most of the ensuing financial year. The transition period for Brexit started on Jan 31st 2020, and ended on Dec 31st 2020. And, whilst the current cost-of-living crisis has had no official start, its effects were already evident before the end of 2021/22.

Financial Results

The survey findings are encouraging. Average turnover reported for the year 2021/22 was £45,553, an increase of £4,897 (12%) on the previous year. Grossed up for the whole community, this indicates a turnover in excess of £7.5M.

The average profit reported was £17,504, an increase of £728 (4%) on the previous year. Grossed up for the community as a whole gives a combined profit of £2.9M.

Within these figures are two key factors. Firstly, the grants that makers received as a result of Covid. In 2020/21, the makers that completed the survey collectively received over £350k in grants or emergency funding. In 2021/22 this fell to £111k. Secondly, Cockpit provided financial relief via rent reduction. In total, rent reductions to the value of £308,000 were made, with the bulk being in 2020/21. These reductions were made possible only through active fundraising throughout the period, combined with careful cost control (specifically, through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme).

When asked about employment, 29% of makers reported that they either employed (PAYE) or regularly used freelancers for 4 hours or more a week. This compares with just 10% in the Crafts Council's 2022 survey of 639 makers. Extended to the whole community this suggests that 91 or more people are being employed by our makers, with an investment of £766k per year.

When added back in the profit figure mentioned earlier, this gives a GVA for the whole community of £3.7M, an increase from the figure in last year's Cockpit Effect which was £3.36M.

However, when asked about future intentions, nearly 20% of the makers that currently employ said that they were unlikely to employ in the next 12 months, an indication of caution about future trading levels.



average
turnover
UP 12%
year-on-year



average
profits
UP 4%
year-on-year



people employed
by makers
(PAYE or freelance)
91



total annual gross
value added
£3.7
MILLION



every
£1
invested in Cockpit
generates a return of
£3.36

ROUTES TO MARKET

Open Studios

Our Open Studio events continue to be a key source of income for makers. The financial survey responses reveal that, on average, Open Studios contributes 8% to each maker's turnover. Grossed up for the community as whole this indicates that our two Open Studio events generate sales in excess of £570k.

Online Sales

We commented last year on the strength and importance of online sales, and how having an online presence was a key driver for most makers. The picture this year is more mixed. At 59%, the number of makers reporting that they have sold online was lower than in our 2022 report (71%) and the value of online sales has fallen for the whole community from £2m to £1.5M. This is partially a reflection of a shift in consumer trends. Whilst during the height of lockdowns, customers were actively buying online, this surge abated a little as restrictions lifted and people relished going out to buy in person. The challenges of exporting to a post-Brexit Europe are also a factor here, particularly for low-volume, smaller-value transactions.

Workshops

Prior to Covid, we had identified workshops as a growing significant source of income for makers. Whilst lockdowns knocked this back, we are now seeing a resurgence. 24% of makers say that they offer in-person workshops, with a further 8% offering both online and in-person. These workshops are marketed to two distinct audiences, those that want to learn a craft and those that are looking for a craft experience. In addition, 29% of makers say that they teach their craft, affirming the importance of the 'portfolio career' not only for diversity of income streams but also to balance solo work and working with others.

Retailer and Gallery Representation

A significant proportion of our makers (58%) sell through retailers. Nearly half of these (42%) sell through overseas retailers as well as UK. 30% are represented by galleries, with a third (35%) having overseas galleries as well as UK ones. Together these figures demonstrate the vital importance of trade and professional audiences to the maker community – a fact that has informed our 2023 strategy.



24%

makers offering in-person workshops



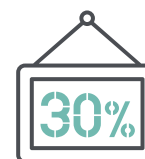
8%

makers offering in-person and online workshops



58%

makers sell through retailers



30%

makers represented by galleries

ROUTES TO MARKET

Selling events

Selling events naturally took a back seat during Covid. However, in the past year we have seen many events coming back to prominence. In the past 12 months, 53% of our makers took part in selling events, with the majority (68%) being direct to consumer. For example, 17 Cockpit makers took part in Collect in 2023 and 16 took part in Goldsmiths Fair. A further 11 Goldsmiths Fair exhibitors were alumni of Cockpit, either through having a studio with us, or in taking part in one of our programmes for external makers. No makers reported taking part only in trade-only events, with nearly one third (31%) stating that they did both.

When asked to look forward to the next 12 months, the respondents all indicated that they would continue to take part in these events.

Exports

Exporting continues to be a strength for Cockpit makers, with 56% saying that they had exported over the past year. This compares with only 36% of makers more widely (Crafts Council, 2021.) As the table below shows, Asia has grown in importance – it is a market for nearly a quarter of our makers (24%) with Europe falling back by 22 percentage points.

Exports by Region	2022	2023
Africa	0%	5%
Asia	16%	24%
Australia	16%	14%
Europe	84%	62%
North America	68%	51%
South America	5%	3%

The value of exports for the community as a whole is estimated to be in excess of £628k, with exports accounting for 15% of turnover for those that export, or 8% of the average turnover for all makers at Cockpit.

As mentioned previously, the post-Brexit challenges of exporting to Europe continue to be a barrier, particularly for those wanting to export relatively small value items infrequently.

makers exporting

56%



exports by Cockpit makers

£628K

top regions for exporting

62%

Europe



51%

North America



MAKER SPOTLIGHT TAMARA GOMEZ

Tamara Gomez originally joined Cockpit in 2008 and then re-joined after a brief spell away. She is based in Bloomsbury



I'm Tamara Gomez and I'm a jeweller.

I design and hand make rough diamond and gemstone jewellery. I am inspired by the stones I use and taking an idiosyncratic approach to using traditional goldsmithing techniques.

My vision and ambition is to maintain an independent jewellery design studio offering bespoke commissions and ready to buy collections.

The challenges/blocks that I've faced are managing growth and being confident with who I am and who I can be creatively. I do also feel that at times my background has been a challenge in terms of how people perceive me and how that in turn has affected my confidence.

My career highpoint so far is appearing on the TV show All That Glitters. That really helped raise my profile to clients and increased my confidence. I'm still perplexed at how taking part in the show has affected my business in such a positive way, though at times the journey has been demanding on my mental and physical health.

What does being in the Cockpit community mean to me? Being in a creative hub with makers from such diverse backgrounds and disciplines. Cockpit has helped me overcome challenges by guiding me on making decisions on how to run my business that are true to me.

WHAT'S NEXT?

What's next is strengthening systems I use to run to my business, so I can spend more time doing what I love.



Sandie joined Cockpit in 2017 and is responsible for both fundraising and the earned income activities that subsidise Cockpit's maker support. Sandie generates funds through a variety of sources: trusts, foundations, livery companies, individual donors, events, tours and more.

Sandie's role involves building relationships with a huge variety of people and organisations who are aligned with the Cockpit vision. Her day-to-day might look like writing a funding proposal to a trust, hosting guests on a tour of the studios, or sharing Cockpit's latest news with Supporters – individual donors who get to see how makers work, discuss their creative process, and be the first to see their latest pieces.

One example is Sandie's work with The Worshipful Company of Glass Sellers, one of our latest Award funders. The Glass Sellers are a small livery company who were not sure whether they would be able to support Cockpit but after visiting our Winter Open Studios they were keen to pledge a bursary contribution for a maker working in glass. Following the success of the inaugural bursary, which went to innovative new glass artist and materials researcher Lulu Harrison, the Company has since increased their support, enabling Cockpit to recruit another maker working in glass.

Through Sandie's efforts, Cockpit provides fully-funded or part-funded places for one in five of our makers – at a value of £7,500 for each fully-funded place – and to substantially subsidise studio spaces all 160+ makers resident in our studios. In a tough fundraising climate, this is no mean feat.

In Sandie's words: **'I think making and creativity are an essential part of life and the economy. My work contributes to a vision of society where creativity has a place in the heart of the community and is central to people's lives – and, in some cases, livelihoods.'**



FUNDRAISING AND INCOME GENERATION

As a social enterprise, 80% of Cockpit's income each year is earned. Our consultancy services and other earned income streams enable us to subsidise studio space in central London that otherwise would be out of reach for most makers, especially those starting out.

In addition, we raise over 20% of our turnover each year from trusts, foundations, individual patrons and, increasingly, corporate sponsors. These generous funders enable us to provide fully-funded and part-funded place – our Awards and Bursaries – that are so vital to giving makers a firm footing as they set out on their careers.

SECTION 8

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the performance of makers at Cockpit over the past two years has been impressive, rebounding from Covid strongly in terms of response to changing market forces and consumer behaviour.

We are seeing encouraging signs of a renewed demand for workshops and other ways of participating in craft, something that is key to our future vision.

The past year has seen an expansion of Cockpit's support for makers beyond our studios, supporting 84 external makers, and an extension of our education, careers and outreach activities, reaching 1318 children, young people and community members, in addition to the 132 university students that have visited.

For the Business Incubation team the challenge ahead is to seize the opportunities to connect with more makers through partnerships, as well as individually, to maximise the reach of 'The Cockpit Effect' – the value we bring to the craft world.

The support we offer will continue to focus on routes to market, diversifying products and services, building trade and professional opportunities, and expanding makers options to respond to the challenges they face. At the time of writing the physical development of Deptford is in mid-flow. The ground floor has been gutted and is being transformed, and the outside studios have their foundation in place. The whole development is on course to be completed by August 2023.

Whilst celebrating the successes of our makers over the past few years, we are mindful of the challenges ahead.

The changing landscape of consumer behaviour and demand, routes to market, and economic environment is a focus for all of us. These are challenging times. The exciting thing is that as a community, collectively, we have the answers. That collective response IS the "Cockpit Effect"

David Crump

Head of Business Incubation

MAKER SPOTLIGHT EKTA KAUL

Ekta Kaul joined Cockpit in 2014 and left in 2022.



I am Ekta Kaul. I am a visual artist. My work seeks to explore and express my interest in place. Home, history and belonging are big themes in my work.

I work with hand embroidery on cloth. More recently my practice has expanded to include painting.

I am inspired by nature, urban textures, cartography.

My vision and ambition is to create ambitious works that express my voice. Aside from being an artist, my vision is to inspire creativity in people by offering them the tools, confidence and community to enable them to express their creativity.

The challenges/blocks that I've faced are building systems to foster sustainable growth of my creative business, for example, marketing, time management and pricing.

My career highpoint so far is having my work exhibited at Collect, a sell-out show of my paintings at London Art Fair this year, a book deal, works acquired by public and private collections, building a community to support textile creatives.

What has being in the Cockpit community meant to me? Cockpit is my creative family- unfailingly supportive and inspiring. I feel honoured to have been part of this very special community made up of talented artists and the passionate team.

Cockpit has helped me overcome challenges by helping me develop systems thinking so I was able to turn my passion into a thriving creative practice and business.

WHAT'S NEXT?

What's next is my forthcoming book on Kantha embroidery, new body of work to be exhibited at Quilt festival, Birmingham, leading a stitch retreat in France.



APPENDIX 1

TEAM AND TRUSTEES

Team

Maxine Clark, Projects Coordinator
Amy Cooper-Wright, Head of Marketing and Digital
David Crump, Head of Business Incubation
Madeleine Furness, Business Incubation Programme Manager
Hugo Godfrey, Financial Controller
Beckie Kingman, Studio Manager, Deptford
Adrian Lee, Studio Manager, Bloomsbury
Sandie Mattioli, Head of Development
Sarah Odong, Events and Admin Assistant
Fabienne O’Neil, Head of Operations
Greta Rilletti-Zaltieri, Awards and Admissions Administrator
Emma Sims, Programme Co-ordinator
Annie Warburton, CEO

Freelance team

David Beidas, Capital Project Manager, Deptford Development
Melanie Dresti, Studio Manager Cover
Francesca Glass, Marketing and Digital Manager
Shital Pattani, Open Studios Event Manager

Trustees

Bill Amberg
Nishita Dewan
Lee Gage
Patricia Godfrey
Clarissa Hulse
Pablo Lloyd OBE, Deputy Chair
Davina Mallinckrodt, Chair
David Moore
Mehul Nathwani
Ben O’Neill
Sarah Samuel

Committee Members & Advisors

Amanda Kay
Debika Ray
Isabel Miao
Scarlett Millar
Ian Smart

FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS

Trusts and Foundations

The Adrian Swire Charitable Trust
The Arts Society
The Arts Society GLA
Bagri Foundation
British Council
The Clothworkers' Company
The John S Cohen Foundation
Curriers' Company Charitable Fund
The Drapers' Charitable Fund
The Dyers' Company Charitable Trust
The Haberdashers' Company
Harriet's Trust
Marsh Charitable Trust
The Needlemakers' Company
The Newby Trust
The Radcliffe Trust
S.H.A Charitable Trust
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation
The Worshipful Company of Basketmakers
The Worshipful Company of Broderers
The Worshipful Company of Glass Sellers
of London
The Worshipful Company of Leathersellers
The Worshipful Company of Tin Plate Workers
alias Wire Workers
The Worshipful Company of Turners

Corporate Support

Briffa
Champagne Gosset
Clear Insurance Management Ltd.
Deutsche Bank
Shalini Misra
Waitrose

Patrons

John & Marianne Adey
Sarah Burgess
Ann Cottis
Preston Fitzgerald & Cedric Smith
Patricia Godfrey
Jill Humphrey
Davina Mallinckrodt
David Robinson
Sarah Samuel
Margaret Tomlin, Ian Synge, and Friends

Champions

Susan Charles
Jake Emmett & Rob Caunt
Maurice
Erin Walls
Dr Veronica White

Friends+

Jane Adam
AMUZN | Nascent Ventures Ltd
Hugh Curthoys
Catherine Dyson
Sian Evans
Lynn Foster
Sam Fry
Alexandra Johnstone
Sandie & Daniel Mattioli
Scarlett Millar
Wendy Morris
Frances Ray
And those who wish to remain anonymous

APPENDIX 3

AWARDS AND BURSARIES IN 2022/23

UAL Award – 2
Turners Award – 1
The New Craftsmen Award/Cockpit – 2
Newby Trust Award – 2
Needlemakers Award – 1
Make It – 5
Leathersellers – 5
Harriet’s Trust Award – 1
Haberdashers’ Award – 2
Clothworkers Award – 7
Ceramic Award – 1
Basketmakers Award – 1
Art Society Award – 1

Credits

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Editor: Annie Warburton
Designer: Craig Yamey
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contact David Crump david@cockpitstudios.org


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